

TOWN WARRANT
Special Town Meeting
December 9, 2002

Hampshire, ss.

To one of the Constables of the Town of Amherst, in said county, Greetings:

In the name of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts you are hereby directed to notify the registered voters of the Town of Amherst of the **Special Town Meeting** to be held in the Auditorium of the Amherst Regional Middle School in said Amherst at seven-thirty o'clock p.m. on **Monday, the ninth day of December, two thousand and two**, when the following articles will be acted upon by town meeting members:

ARTICLE 1. Petition – Special Act – Bilingual Education

(Not In Our Town, Puerto Rican Association, Amherst Voting Rights Campaign, Multilingual Coalition)

To see if the town will vote to adopt the following resolution and request to the Select Board to seek a special act from the General Court:

Whereas, the town of Amherst and the other towns that comprise the Amherst-Pelham Regional School District voted overwhelmingly to reject Question 2 at the November 5, 2002 General Election; and,

Whereas, the Amherst School District has Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE) programs in each of its four elementary schools – Spanish in Crocker Farm, Khmer in Fort River, Korean in Marks Meadow, and Chinese in Wildwood; and,

Whereas, the Amherst School District and Amherst-Pelham Regional School District have English as a Second Language (ESL) programs in all their schools; and,

Whereas, Question 2 would eliminate Transitional Bilingual Education programs and drastically affect ESL programs, replacing them with a one-year, one-size-fits-all English immersion program; and,

Whereas, the Larkin-Antonioni Bill reforming bilingual education, An Act Relative to Enhancing English Opportunities for All Students in the Commonwealth, was passed by the General Court and signed by the Acting Governor in August of 2002; and,

Whereas, Question 2 is educationally unsound, was a failure in the State of California, was rejected by the voters of the State of Colorado, and would damage the long-term interests of children whose primary language is not English;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Amherst Representative Town Meeting requests the Amherst Select Board to promptly file with the General Court a request for a special act to exempt the Amherst School District and the Amherst-Pelham Regional School District from any impact whatsoever of Question 2 of the November 2002 General Election and to allow said school districts to continue to educate children whose primary language is not English in accordance with the provisions of the Larkin-Antonioni Bill and other applicable state and federal laws.

ARTICLE 2. Resolution – Bilingual Education (School Committee)

To see if the Town will adopt the following resolution:

Whereas, the programs for teaching English to non-English speaking students specified in Ballot Question #2, passed by the voters in the November 2002 election, are unproven and are considered controversial by many education experts; and,

Whereas, the changes in the bilingual education law enacted earlier in 2002 by the Massachusetts Legislature have not yet taken effect and have not yet been able to demonstrate their impact on improving bilingual education success in the schools; and,

Whereas, many school districts, including Amherst, do not want their bilingual education programs that have proven successful to be replaced with the unproven and less flexible “sheltered immersion” program specified in Ballot Question #2; and,

Whereas, at the last convention of the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC), the members voted overwhelmingly against enacting Ballot Question #2; and,

Whereas, the statistics analyzing the success of a similar, but less rigid, program in California are ambiguous and unconvincing; and,

Whereas, all of the towns in the Amherst and Amherst-Pelham Regional school districts voted overwhelmingly against Ballot Question #2;
Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Town of Amherst requests that Senator Stan Rosenberg and Representative Ellen Story support the enactment of the bilingual education reforms voted by the Legislature and signed by the governor in the summer of 2002, and that they use their full influence to prevent Ballot Question #2 from being enacted into law,
And be it furthermore resolved that the Town of Amherst urges the Great and General Court to repeal the Ballot Question #2 initiative,
And be it further resolved the Town Clerk of Amherst is directed to convey copies of this resolution to all Massachusetts Senators and Representatives, to the Governor, and to the Governor-Elect.

You are hereby directed to serve this call by posting attested copies thereof at the usual places:

Prec. 1 North Amherst Post Office	Prec. 6	Fort River School
Prec. 2 North Fire Station	Prec. 7	Crocker Farm School
Prec. 3 Marks Meadow School	Prec. 8	Munson Memorial Library
Prec. 4 Amherst Post Office	Prec. 9	Wildwood School
Prec. 5 Town Hall	Prec. 10	Campus Center, UMass

Hereof fail not and make return of this warrant with your doings thereon at the time and place of said meeting.

Given under our hands this twenty-fifth day of November, 2002.

Carl Seppala
Eddy Goldberg
Dolly Jolly
Eva Schiffer

Board of Selectmen

November 25, 2002
Date

Hampshire, ss.

In obedience to the within warrant, I have this day as directed posted true and attested copies thereof at the above designated places, to wit:

C. Nelson
Constable, Town of Amherst